1.   A method for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of terminals connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at a first terminal a plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by a video camera associated with a different terminal;

5   simultaneously displaying the plurality of video streams on the first terminal;

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed; and

establishing two-way video communication between the first terminal and the terminal associated with the selected video stream.

10   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein at least one video stream comprises a live video stream generated by a webcam.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein at least one video stream comprises a pre-recorded video stream in response to the video camera associated with the

15   selected video stream being currently inactive.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein displaying comprises:

arranging the plurality of video streams in a grid format on the first terminal.

20   5.   The method of claim 1, wherein displaying comprises:

arranging the plurality of video streams in a ticker format on the first terminal.

6.   The method of claim 5, further comprising:

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moving the video streams in a same direction across at least a portion of a display screen of the first terminal.

7.   The method of claim 1, wherein at least one terminal comprises an interactive television system.

8.   The method of claim 1, wherein receiving comprises:

selectively receiving video streams corresponding to entries in a video phonebook.

9.   The method of claim 1, wherein detecting comprises:

moving a selection outline around a displayed video stream in response to user activation of navigational buttons on a remote control device; and

detecting user activation of a specifically-designated button on the remote control device for establishing two-way video communication.

10.   The method of claim 1, wherein establishing comprises:

displaying a video communication window on the first terminal;

capturing a first video stream using a video camera associated with the first terminal;

transmitting the first video stream to the second terminal for display thereon;

receiving a second video stream from the second terminal; and

displaying the second video stream in the video communication window on the first terminal.

11.   The method of claim 10, further comprising:

enlarging the selected video stream as displayed on the first terminal relative to the non-selected video streams, wherein the enlarged video stream comprises the video communication window.

12.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

caching at least one video stream generated by a video camera.

13.   The method of claim 12, wherein the at least one video stream is cached at a location selected from the group consisting of the terminal from which the video stream originated, the first terminal, a satellite broadcast center, and a cable head-end.

14.   The method of claim 12, further comprising:

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed;

retrieving a cached copy of an earlier-in-time segment of the selected video stream; and

displaying the cached copy of the earlier-in-time segment on the first terminal.

15.   A method for establishing two-way video communication between a
plurality of terminals connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at an intermediate network node a plurality of video streams, each
video stream being generated by a video camera associated with a different

5   terminal;

combining the plurality of video streams into a composite video stream;

sending the composite video stream to a first terminal for display thereon;

detecting a user selection of one of the plurality of video streams being
displayed within the composite video stream; and

10   establishing two-way video communication between the first terminal and the
terminal associated with the selected video stream.

16.   The method of claim 15, wherein the intermediate network node
comprises a cable head-end.

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17.   The method of claim 15, wherein the intermediate network node
comprises a satellite broadcast center.

18.   A method for establishing two-way video communication between a
20   plurality of terminals connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at a first terminal a plurality of video streams, each video stream
being associated with a different terminal;

simultaneously displaying the plurality of video streams on the first terminal;

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed;

establishing a two-way video communication channel between the first

terminal and a second terminal associated with the selected video stream;

displaying a video communication window on the first terminal;

5   capturing a first video stream using a video camera associated with the first

terminal;

transmitting the first video stream to the second terminal for display thereon;

receiving a second video stream from the second terminal; and

displaying the second video stream in the video communication window on

10   the first terminal.

19.   The method of claim 18, wherein at least one video stream comprises

a live video stream generated by a webcam.

15   20.   A method for establishing two-way video communication between a

plurality of interactive television systems connected by a network, the method

comprising:

receiving at a first interactive television system a plurality of video streams,

each video stream being generated by webcam associated with a different

20   interactive television system;

simultaneously displaying the plurality of video streams on the first interactive

television system;

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed; and

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establishing two-way video communication between the first interactive television system and the interactive televisions system associated with the selected video stream.

5   21.   A computer program product comprising program code for performing a method for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of terminals connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at a first terminal a plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by a video camera associated with a different terminal;

10   simultaneously displaying the plurality of video streams on the first terminal;

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed; and

establishing two-way video communication between the first terminal and the terminal associated with the selected video stream.

15   22.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein at least one video stream comprises a live video stream generated by a webcam.

23.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein at least one video stream comprises a pre-recorded video stream in response to the video camera

20   associated with the selected video stream being currently inactive.

24.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein displaying comprises:

arranging the plurality of video streams in a grid format on the first terminal.

25.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein displaying comprises:

arranging the plurality of video streams in a ticker format on the first terminal.

26.   The computer program product of claim 25, the method further comprising:

moving the video streams in a same direction across at least a portion of a display screen of the first terminal.

27.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein at least one terminal comprises an interactive television system.

28.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein receiving comprises:

selectively receiving video streams corresponding to entries in a video phonebook.

29.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein detecting comprises:

moving a selection outline around a displayed video stream in response to user activation of navigational buttons on a remote control device; and

detecting user activation of a specifically-designated button on the remote

control device for establishing two-way video communication.

30.   The computer program product of claim 21, wherein establishing

5   comprises:

displaying a video communication window on the first terminal;

capturing a first video stream using a video camera associated with the first

terminal;

transmitting the first video stream to the second terminal for display thereon;

10   receiving a second video stream from the second terminal; and

displaying the second video stream in the video communication window on

the first terminal.

31.   The computer program product of claim 30, the method further

15   comprising:

enlarging the selected video stream as displayed on the first terminal relative

to the non-selected video streams, wherein the enlarged video stream comprises the

video communication window.

20   32.   The computer program product of claim 21, the method further

comprising:

caching at least one video stream generated by a video camera.

33. The computer program product of claim 32, wherein the at least one video stream is cached at a location selected from the group consisting of the terminal from which the video stream originated, the first terminal, a satellite broadcast center, and a cable head-end.

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34. The computer program product of claim 32, the method further comprising:

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed;

retrieving a cached copy of an earlier-in-time segment of the selected video

10 stream; and

displaying the cached copy of the earlier-in-time segment on the first terminal.

35. A computer program product comprising program code for performing a method for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of

15 terminals connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at an intermediate network node a plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by a video camera associated with a different terminal;

combining the plurality of video streams into a composite video stream;

20 sending the composite video stream to a first terminal for display thereon;

detecting a user selection of one of the plurality of video streams being displayed within the composite video stream; and

establishing two-way video communication between the first terminal and the terminal associated with the selected video stream.

36.   The computer program product of claim 35, wherein the intermediate network node comprises a cable head-end.

37.   The computer program product of claim 35, wherein the intermediate network node comprises a satellite broadcast center.

38.   A computer program product comprising program code for performing a method for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of terminals connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at a first terminal a plurality of video streams, each video stream being associated with a different terminal;

simultaneously displaying the plurality of video streams on the first terminal;

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed;

establishing a two-way video communication channel between the first terminal and a second terminal associated with the selected video stream;

displaying a video communication window on the first terminal;

capturing a first video stream using a video camera associated with the first terminal;

transmitting the first video stream to the second terminal for display thereon;

receiving a second video stream from the second terminal; and

displaying the second video stream in the video communication window on the first terminal.

39.   The computer program product of claim 38, wherein at least one video stream comprises a live video stream generated by a webcam.

40.   A computer program product comprising program code for performing a method for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of interactive television systems connected by a network, the method comprising:

receiving at a first interactive television system a plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by webcam associated with a different interactive television system;

simultaneously displaying the plurality of video streams on the first interactive television system;

detecting a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed; and

establishing two-way video communication between the first interactive television system and the interactive televisions system associated with the selected video stream.

41.   A system for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of terminals connected by a network, the system comprising:

a stream reception component configured to receive at a first terminal a

plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by a video camera

associated with a different terminal;

a stream display component configured to simultaneously display the plurality

5   of video streams on the first terminal;

a stream selection component configured to detect a user selection of one of

the video streams being displayed; and

a video communication component configured to establish two-way video

communication between the first terminal and the terminal associated with the

10   selected video stream.

42.   The system of claim 41, wherein at least one video stream comprises a

live video stream generated by a webcam.

15   43.   The system of claim 41, wherein at least one video stream comprises a

pre-recorded video stream in response to the video camera associated with the

selected video stream being currently inactive.

44.   The system of claim 41, wherein the stream display component is

20   further configured to arrange the plurality of video streams in a grid format on the

first terminal.

45.   The system of claim 41, wherein the stream display component is further configured to arrange the plurality of video streams in a ticker format on the first terminal.

5   46.   The system of claim 45. wherein the stream display component is further configured to move the video streams in a same direction across at least a portion of a display screen of the first terminal.

47.   The system of claim 41, wherein at least one terminal comprises an

10   interactive television system.

48.   The system of claim 41, wherein the stream reception component is further configured to selectively receive video streams corresponding to entries in a video phonebook.

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49.   The system of claim 41, wherein the stream selection component is further configured to move a selection outline around a displayed video stream in response to user activation of navigational buttons on a remote control device and detect user activation of a specifically-designated button on the remote control

20   device for establishing two-way video communication.

50.   The system of claim 41, wherein the video communication component is further configured to display a video communication window on the first terminal;

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capture a first video stream using a video camera associated with the first terminal; transmit the first video stream to the second terminal for display thereon; receive a second video stream from the second terminal; and display the second video stream in the video communication window on the first terminal.

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51.   The system of claim 50, wherein the video communication component is further configured to enlarge the selected video stream as displayed on the first terminal relative to the non-selected video streams, wherein the enlarged video stream comprises the video communication window.

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52.   The system of claim 41, further comprising:

a stream caching component configured to cache at least one video stream generated by a video camera.

15   53.   The system of claim 52, wherein the at least one video stream is cached at a location selected from the group consisting of the terminal from which the video stream originated, the first terminal, a satellite broadcast center, and a cable head-end.

20   54.   The system of claim 52, wherein the stream selection component is further configured to detect another user selection of one of the video streams being displayed; wherein the stream caching component is further configured to retrieve a cached copy of an earlier-in-time segment of the selected video stream; and wherein

the stream display component is further configured to display the cached copy of the earlier-in-time segment on the first terminal.

55.   A system for establishing two-way video communication between a
5   plurality of terminals connected by a network, the system comprising:

a stream reception component configured to receive at an intermediate network node a plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by a video camera associated with a different terminal;

a stream compositing component configured to combining the plurality of
10   video streams into a composite video stream;

a stream transmission component configured to send the composite video stream to a first terminal for display thereon;

a stream selection component configured to detect a user selection of one of the plurality of video streams being displayed within the composite video stream;
15   and

a video communication component configured to establish two-way video communication between the first terminal and the terminal associated with the selected video stream.

20   56.   The system of claim 55, wherein the intermediate network node comprises a cable head-end.

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57.   The system of claim 55, wherein the intermediate network node comprises a satellite broadcast center.

58.   A system for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of terminals connected by a network, the system comprising:

a stream reception component configured to receive at a first terminal a plurality of video streams, each video stream being associated with a different terminal;

a stream display component configured to simultaneously display the plurality of video streams on the first terminal;

a stream selection component configured to detect a user selection of one of the video streams being displayed;

a video communication component configured to establish a two-way video communication channel between the first terminal and a second terminal associated with the selected video stream; display a video communication window on the first terminal; capture a first video stream using a video camera associated with the first terminal; transmit the first video stream to the second terminal for display thereon; receive a second video stream from the second terminal; and display the second video stream in the video communication window on the first terminal.

59.   The system of claim 58, wherein at least one video stream comprises a live video stream generated by a webcam.

60.   A system for establishing two-way video communication between a plurality of interactive television systems connected by a network, the system comprising:

a stream reception component configured to receive at a first interactive

5   television system a plurality of video streams, each video stream being generated by webcam associated with a different interactive television system;

a stream display component configured to simultaneously display the plurality of video streams on the first interactive television system;

a stream selection component configured to detect a user selection of one of

10   the video streams being displayed; and

a video communication component configured to establish two-way video communication between the first interactive television system and the interactive televisions system associated with the selected video stream.

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